Creative Writing

Day 22
Daily Description: Describe being afraid.

Agenda:
- Daily Description
- Review of Memoir expectations
- Peer Review procedures and expectations
- Peer Review of Memoir
- Revision strategies
Today’s Objectives

- I will know strategies I can use to help me strengthen my memoir.
- I will be able to communicate my thoughts and ideas about the writing of others in a clear and respectful way.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Reflection is well written and covers the questions asked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Title is appealing and its relation to piece is apparent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>The format of the written product is correct for the genre and/or specific type of work. The writer has used baby steps, thought shots, and expanded moments appropriately throughout.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>The written product contains creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. Many examples of imagery. Similes, metaphors, and other types of figurative language bring the piece to life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>The story is interesting and makes sense. The characters, setting, plot, conflict, and dialogue are well done and engage the reader.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flow &amp; Rhythm</td>
<td>Sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics and Conventions</td>
<td>Very few errors. The paper is easy to read.</td>
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Expectations for Peer Review (Complete 2)

• How to give meaningful response

• **Point**: Point out and describe the really good stuff in this person’s writing. Your job here is to tell someone else what struck you as a reader and why it struck you. Explain specifically why you like certain parts of their writing.

• **Nudge**: Try to identify one thing they could address that would help you as reader with their writing. Give them a few suggestions or a thorough explanation of how you’re experiencing their writing.

• **Encouragement**: Talk to the writer about what they have accomplished so far. It is very helpful to hear how others read your writing, so summarize what they have said as you understand it and encourage them to go further with what they’ve done.
Writing Topic Sentences

- Directions: For each of the items on the next two slides, write a sentence that you feel would make a good first sentence for a paragraph about that topic.
• What if you arrived at school one day and only half of the number of teachers appeared?
• Suppose no one knew how to talk.
• What advice would you give a younger person about life?
• Suppose that insects and human beings changed sizes. How would that change life?
• What are the voices of springtime?
• If you were able to go back in time, when and where would you go?
• Imagine that overnight all currency in the world disappeared. What effect would this have on the economic system?
• If you could only see one person before you died, who might that person be?
Developing Paragraphs

- Narration - tells a story
- Exposition - explains a situation
- Definition - defines a word/idea
- Description - shows what needs to be seen
- Comparison - compares/contrasts anything
- Process Analysis - lists a series of actions
- Persuasion - tells the reader to think like you
Revision Strategies

- Read through your Peer Reviewer’s suggestions to help you see areas that need work.
- Look for places where you could insert a baby step or thought shot.
• Are you using expanded moments? Where can you slow down the action to let your readers experience the moment?

• Consider revising your opening lines and topic sentences.
Think about the types of paragraphs you’re using and consider trying a new kind.

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• Read your paper out loud (even better – have someone else read it out loud to you). Do any sections drag? Try cutting out extra information or details to help you emphasize the most important.

• Read carefully to find any “clunky” sentences and look for any of the deadly sins. Fix them!
Sentiment vs. Sentimentality

- Attempting to write about your own life in a way that impacts the reader emotionally and intellectually can lead to over dramatization that may, in fact, detract from the quality of the work. The emotions that we all experience – joy, despair, grief, longing – can easily become abstractions on the page.

- To avoid sentimentality, free write, dream, and reflect about the feelings and experiences you are writing about, and then reveal and illuminate these experiences through **detail and description** rather than labels.
Focus on **showing** through action and vivid description the reader can experience instead of merely telling the reader about the experience.

For example, instead of “John was angry at how he had been treated,” write “John stomped into the room and threw his books on the table.”
Interviewer: How much rewriting do you do?
Hemingway: It depends. I rewrote the ending of *Farewell to Arms*, the last page of it, 39 times before I was satisfied.
Interviewer: Was there some technical problem there? What was it that had stumped you?
Hemingway: Getting the words right.
Reminders:

- Memoir and reflection due next time.
- Reflection should be a well-developed paragraph in which you discuss your story. Why did you choose to tell this story? What techniques did you use to develop your story? How did you revise?